

Richard Gilliam Dunlap to Andrew Jackson, July 2, 1823, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

GENERAL RICHARD G. DUNLAP TO JACKSON.

Knoxville, Tennessee, July 2, 1823.

Dear Sir, I am aware, from present exigencies, that you have been troubled, with *this* kind of letter politeness—judging as I do from the usual *arts* of man. But as I am now, what I have been, since you have had a cause before this nation, I claim an exemption, in the matter, to which my letter shall relate, of all motives, tending to my personal intrest.

I will give you a brief statement, of the rise and progress of things, in *this place*, to enable, you more easily, to understand the object I have in veiw. I came to this place in the summer of 1819 and found the place, in commotion, which rose out of a struggle between your friends and enemies. The former have been faithfull and vigilant and grown, to an appaling sise, in the sight of the latter, who have weakened as rapidly, as their dark designs and duplicity have vanished, when the light of truth exposed thier deperviety.

The first object of your friends here, was, to rescue your reputation from calumny and place it, (where it before, stood) above the reach of the malevolent. This was done, by scourging those, who vilely assailed your character, under the cover of the coward's shield; and long before your nomination to the presidency by the Tennessee legislature. Among those who aided to prostrate, Colo Williams, and his idle W. H. Crafford¹ who dared to satiate the vengence of mean souls, upon your *paid for*, reputation, W. G. Blount was the first and last.

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1 I. e., idol W. H. Crawford.

Your nomination to the presidency, has been of subsequent origin and in fact was viewed of minor importance, to the warding off, those deadly blows which were aim[ed] at your standing: and now can be use[d] as a means by which, pay can be had for former injuries. "A change how sad!" Though not to me, its truly melancolly notwithstanding. "Anguish rends the heart" but still your friends feel a *soothing comfort*.

To be or not to be, is the awfull struggle with the colo, and not *to be*, is what I'm for.² Things seemed to have been, under the guidance of heaven, all going on smoothly, for the defeat of the *horse shoe* Colo.—until the ancient and late hon. Mr Rhea diclined a reelection in his district, *without a vale dictore*, which to me bespeaks a splitting of friends. My great anxiety for success, may have so tortured my immagination, that it has wrongfully begot this difficulty. But should it exist, it ought in my opinion to be *checked in the bud*. Mr Rhea is considered superanuated and will not be near so strong as W. G. Blount in East Tennessee. the same objection will hold good in the west. Mr Blount has long been spoken of as a candidate for the senate, and in this county the test of the present election, is somewhat, between the Colo. and him. Should Rhea be a candidate, your advice, for him to retire, will not only save him from the pain of defeat, but will secure the Colo, in his fair claim to retirement, tho not with the same honor.

2 Col. John Williams was senator from Tennessee and was up for re-election. He was conspicuously opposed to Jackson, whose friends felt it necessary to defeat him. It was finally decided to run Jackson against him as the only man in the state who could put Williams down. The scheme succeeded. On this election see W. B. Lewis's account in Parton's *Jackson*, III. 21–23.

Your friend

I do not request an answer.

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N. B. I have not shewn this letter to any person.

R. G. D.